

OHTANI! Liger! HOKUTO! Uematsu! KAORU! Ichiki! TERRY TAYLOR! Bobby Eaton! and other stuff on the positive tip this week!

Howdy!

Welcome to DEATH VALLEY DRIVER VIDEO REVIEW #30! This week I'm gonna do the other half of the Glenn Tape I got with the MONSTER Ohtani/Liger match and the GAEA Bridge Ladies of Death Tape, part II. I also watched a batch of early 90's WCW stuff. I also started the Japanese Women's Wrestling Marathon of Marathons so this will be a little brief as I wanted to TRY to do all of those tapes all at once. WOO-HOO!

-John Williams (beloved yet Beelezebub-esque:)) tipped me off on what the Ohtani/Liger J-Crown Match was gonna be like when he said it was a lot like a certain match recently at Koruken Hall and I'm sure he meant that it compares QUITE a bit to the Misawa/Kobashi Triple Crown match from last month in psychology and perfection of selling and execution- though of course there was a lot of differences also, but I'll try to get to those later.:) Both matches were basically the Old Veteran is doing everything he can to finish off the upstart, but the upstart- feeling the need to replace the veteran in his position of greatness, and realizing that this match is his best opportunity- isn't going down regardless of the number of TigerDrivers or FishermanBuster Suplexes the old fella does. Ohtani and Kobashi sell similarly, getting those overwrought facials that young punks are allowed to get. Kobashi is too old for that, so he doesn't do it in his match for the first time since I've seen him, which is the first step of reaching the true top level of All Japan- being the veteran that doesn't have to get all fired up, but one who can stoically take your opponent apart. The much younger Ohtani is much more excitable, and Liger is more Misawa than Misawa in terms of greatness so this definitely took on an identity of its own by the time one thinks about it overall. Liger hits Ohtani with all his past finishers- Fisherman Buster Suplex, Liger Bomb and they don't put him away. Ohtani used everything in his arsenal, this side of his rarely used springboard DDT, to get the win. There were lots of nearfalls both ways with the best ones for Ohtani after the springboard missile kick at the end and after they did the spot that Ohtani and Ultimo Dragon did in their match where UD is perched on the turnbuckle and kept knocking Shinjiro off except, this time, Ohtani hits the frankensteiner. The ending of both of the J-Crown and The Triple Crown Match had similar endings in that both Misawa and Liger both start using their famous striking move to get the win- Misawa hitting all those elbows between TigerDrivers and Liger beating the crap out of Ohtani with palm thrusts. Liger has his finisher in his match made to look a lot stronger because it was a beautifully-sold running palm thrust that Ohtani made look like he was hit with a baseball bat. What a GREAT match and what a great month for wrestling!

-The GAEA Champ Forum with the Akira Hokuto/Toshie Uematsu vs KAORU/Ichiki match was pretty beautiful and VERY grim. The Bridge Club of GAEA continues to take out their frustrations at getting older by beating the holy hell out the youngsters- even one's they are tagging with. The match is full of neckwrenching AJ suplexes and assorted drivers with Ichiki taking the brunt of the truly Hellish Akira BackDrop Driver and Uematsu taking the brunt of the KAORU-does-the-TAKABomb. Toshie also does an assisted double leg drop off the top to the

floor that much pretty ended up with her landing on her head after Akira throws her WAY to hard at the young Miss Ichiki and KAORU. Ichiki looked as good as she has looked so far, which would figure since Akira was there to help her through it (and slam her on top of her head). Toshie looked EVEN SPUNKIER being all tough and whatnot with Akira. Akira is looking GREAT these days assuming the role of the total cranky old woman who is absolute death in the ring. She works so stiff and is so dynamic, you forget that she has been through an entire crippling career in AJW and shouldn't be able to walk that well, much less improve her arsenal to include state-of-the-art All Japan moves. She's always had flawless psychology so I'll just restate that here. GAEA rules yadda yadda yadda...:)

-I watched a bunch of early 90's WCW and GOD! did a lot of it suck. The York Foundation was one of the stupidest ideas in wrestling, with the stomach-churning computer crap, but it did get involved with the best match of the stuff I saw, which was Terry Taylor vs Bobby Eaton for the TV title tournament. It was very Mid-South: sound psychology, no highspots, hellish bumps, clean pinfall, high workrate. I'm glad I saw that because I remember Taylor being a great worker from UWF, but I had forgotten how good Eaton used to be. The Pillman/Tom Zenk vs Midnight Express match was really good. Lane and Eaton are about at their peak here as they hit everything perfectly. Lane was a good worker if not in the Eaton category. Zenk looked like he might have become something at that point, I can't remember what happened to change that. The rest was mindwrenchingly bad to well-documentedly good.:)

-I watched ECW last week, as I was in Tidewater under direct orders from the Army of Grandmas-The Strongest Force In The Universe:) and all I can say is that Tommy Rich as a Full-Blooded Italian was the best thing I have EVER seen on that show. A old, fat, drunk redneck pissing people off in Philadelphia was absolute MAGIC. I think I might have cried at the sheer beauty of it all. That rookie looked promising and Little Guido is really good I think. The rest sucked donkey lungs.

NANIWA~!